



Residential Youth Services & Empowerment

# 2024 Annual Report

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2024 was a year of resilience, growth, and deepened impact for RYSE as we continued our mission to support youth experiencing homelessness and housing instability across O'ahu. From shelter services and mobile outreach to behavioral health and diversion, our team remained steadfast in providing youth with comprehensive care and the tools they need to heal, grow, and thrive.



At our Shelter & Access Center at Kawaiiloa, 107 transition-aged youth found a safe place to rest and rebuild, while 118 more accessed our drop-in services. Nearly half transitioned to permanent or transitional housing—a reflection of our team's commitment to meaningful exits. Our outreach team connected with over 550 youth, linking 93 directly to shelter and even housing two youth directly from the streets—an incredible accomplishment that speaks to the power of trust and persistence.

Our behavioral health team supported 140 unduplicated youth through 2,009 counseling sessions and trauma-informed groups, ensuring mental and emotional healing were central to our services. Our Diversion program served 72 unique youth, providing meaningful alternatives to incarceration and offering critical support to help interrupt cycles of justice involvement and build brighter futures.

We are deeply grateful to our partners, funders, volunteers, and staff who made this impact possible. While challenges remain—from repeat shelter entries to increased sweeps that displace youth—our goals for 2025 focus on structured pathways to success, deeper collaboration, and more targeted supports to meet youth where they are.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carla Houser". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Carla Houser, Executive Director

# RYSE SHELTER & ACCESS CENTER AT KAWAILOA

## A Year of Shelter, Support, and Second Chances

This year has been a testament to the power of community and the resilience of Hawaii's youth. At RYSE's Shelter & Access Center at Kawaiiloa, we've worked tirelessly to provide a safe space for young people facing homelessness, helping them take meaningful steps toward stability.

Thanks to the unwavering support of our donors, volunteers, and partners, our shelter has been a place of refuge, transformation, and hope. Whether it was offering a warm bed, a meal, or simply a place to regroup, we have seen firsthand how even small acts of kindness can change lives.

### By the Numbers: In 2024



- 107 Youth (18-24) were sheltered at the RYSE Shelter.
- 118 Youth (18-24) utilized the drop-in services - with 44 transitioning to beds at the Access Center.
- 46 Youth or 43% (18-24) found pathways to stability—moving from our shelter into permanent housing, reuniting with their families, or transitioning to group or temporary housing units.



### What Youth Can Expect at the Access Center

- Basic Needs: Meals, pantry access, showers, laundry, clothing, hygiene supplies, and WiFi.
- Case Management & Referrals: Housing assistance, healthcare, benefits, and substance abuse treatment.
- Employment & Education: Job readiness, school enrollment, and financial aid, financial literacy.
- Safe Drop-In Space: A welcoming place for youth to rest and connect with staff.

# YOUTH OUTREACH

## Reaching Youth Where They Are

The RYSE Outreach team continues to strengthen community partnerships to expand services and reach more youth in need. Through conferences and collaborations, they've built key connections to enhance service delivery for vulnerable populations.

Partnerships with Hawai'i Health and Harm Reduction Center and Hale Kipa have made it possible to host Mobile Crisis Outreach (MCO) Pop-Up Events, boosting visibility, trust, and access to critical services where they're needed most.

A major milestone this year was successfully housing two youth directly from street homelessness, bypassing the need for shelter stays. This achievement required significant trust-building and coordination, demonstrating the strength of our outreach efforts and our commitment to securing stable housing solutions for young people in crisis.

### By the Numbers: In 2024



- 383 days of community outreach by the RYSE Outreach Team, providing direct support to youth in need.
- 556 youth reached through community outreach, connecting them to critical resources and support.
- 93 youth connected to the RYSE Access Center in Kailua for shelter and essential services.



RYSE Outreach is often the first point of contact for youth experiencing homelessness, building trust and connections that can lead to life-changing support. Meeting youth where they are, Outreach offers essential resources, housing pathways, and hope for a more stable future.



# EMPOWERMENT

## Education and Employment for a Brighter Future

In 2024, RYSE's Empowerment Team made significant strides in supporting youth on their paths toward stability and self-sufficiency. Through the RYSE to Hana internship program, 27 youth gained meaningful job training, with an impressive 22 securing employment after completion of the program. Our Earn & Learn initiative offered hands-on field experiences that helped youth develop essential workplace skills and build connections with potential employers.

Additionally, many participants earned certifications in CPR, Mental Health First Aid, and Food Handling Safety, each an important credential that not only promotes safety and well-being, but also increases a young person's employability.

On the education front, 47 youth entered RYSE without a high school diploma. Thanks to our education support programs, 4 earned their GED, 5 graduated with a high school diploma through DOE or Penn Foster, and 8 are actively working toward their equivalency by passing at least one HISET exam. Each of these achievements reflects the power of opportunity, guidance, and belief in our youth's potential to rise.

### By the Numbers: In 2024



- 58 youth enrolled in GED programs, college, or school, with 12 completing their GED or high school diploma or enrolling in higher education.
- 140 youth enrolled in employment services, with 94 securing paid internships and 46 gaining employment.
- 51 youth enrolled in cultural connection services, with nearly 100% connected to 'Ōlelo, 'Āina-based workshops, or cultural-based healing.

# DIVERSION

## Changing the Future for Justice-Involved Youth

At RYSE, we believe every young person deserves a second chance. Our Diversion Program helps justice-involved youth navigate the legal system, connecting them with resources that prevent deeper system involvement and create pathways to stability.

With strong partnerships across District and Circuit Courts, the Office of the Public Defender, and Adult Client Services Branch, RYSE is a trusted advocate for youth who often face overwhelming barriers. Recognized by the Youth Policy Project as a one-of-a-kind program on O'ahu, our work is especially critical for BIPOC, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and LGBTQ+ youth, who are disproportionately affected by the justice system.

### By the Numbers: In 2024



- 72 justice-involved youth received support through the RYSE Diversion Program.
- 172 court hearings were attended by the RYSE Diversion team on behalf of youth, advocating for fair treatment and support.
- 156 in-reach visits were conducted by the RYSE Diversion team to engage and support justice-involved youth directly.

### What's an In-Reach Visit?



In-Reach Visits by the RYSE Diversion team involve engaging with youth in systems such as OCCC, WCCC, HYCF, hospitals, and residential treatment facilities. During these visits, the team provides a range of services, including assistance with EBT/GA applications, ID acquisition, rental applications, cell phones, low-income bus passes, and health insurance.

## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

### Expanding Services for Lasting Impact

RYSE continues to expand its behavioral health services, offering vital support through substance use counseling, anger management, poetry and art therapy, and physical wellness activities like yoga and hiking. These programs provide youth with healthy coping strategies, emotional support, and opportunities for self-expression.

In addition to group sessions, our team ensures that youth receive individualized care through supportive counseling and connections to essential services. This year, RYSE made significant strides by securing credentialing with all five Med-QUEST insurances, obtaining reimbursement for critical services, and expanding our team with a Certified Substance Abuse Counselor (CSAC). These milestones enhance our ability to provide sustainable, high-quality care and empower youth on their journey toward healing and stability.

### By the Numbers: In 2024



- 140 unduplicated youth received behavioral health services
- 89 unduplicated youth participated in therapeutic groups
- 2,009 supportive counseling sessions provided



Congratulations to Scrappy on his graduation from the Job Corps! Through our partnership with Hawai'i Job Corps, youth like Scrappy gain access to education, vocational training, and career opportunities that pave the way for long-term success. We're incredibly proud of his hard work and dedication.

# HOUSING

## Foundation for the Future

This year, RYSE provided safe, supportive housing to youth across all of its properties. At our Makiki transitional home, four youth moved into permanent housing, while all residents steadily built life skills through monthly workshops and activities. Manu O Kū welcomed chronically homeless youth into a stable, welcoming space, with two residents consistently paying rent on time. At Rycroft, one youth with serious mental illness successfully transitioned into permanent housing, and the home was refreshed to create a more comforting environment. In Hale'iwa, 10 youth entered deeply affordable housing—five moved on to independent living, while others found stabilization through support. Apapane, RYSE's sober living home, offered a recovery-focused environment where youth worked on their sobriety, rebuilding confidence and self-sufficiency.

### By the Numbers: In 2024



- 119 Young Lives Sheltered and Supported in RYSE housing this year
- 10 youth were housed at Raphael House in Region 7 during its first year—reaching full capacity
- 14 youth were housed at Apapane, RYSE's first sober-living home, providing a stable environment for recovery



### Innovative Housing on the Leeward Coast

In February 2024, RYSE and Alternative Structures International (ASI) launched Raphael House—a supportive new residence in Wai'anae that expands RYSE's housing portfolio by 10 beds. Alongside wraparound case management and life skills support, youth residents gain access to hands-on job training through ASI's on-site organic farm, café, and adult day health program. Raphael House offers more than shelter—it's a community-rooted model designed to help youth live, work, and thrive where they are.



## YOUTH SPOTLIGHT

### Alexis's Journey from Shelter to Staff



At RYSE, we believe in the power of second chances—and Alexis's story is a powerful testament to what's possible when youth are given the right support, guidance, and opportunities.

Alexis first came to RYSE as a youth experiencing homelessness, seeking safety, stability, and a fresh start. She quickly learned that success takes self-determination. "At first, I was waiting for someone to tell me what to do," she recalled. "But then I heard a youth say, 'Open mouths don't get fed,' and that really stuck with me. I realized I had to take charge of my own future."

Your With support from RYSE's dedicated staff, Alexis found her footing. She took advantage of every opportunity—from shelter resources to our RYSE to Hana internship program—eventually helping others by tutoring GED students at the very shelter she once called home.

Today, Alexis is a proud member of the RYSE team and lives in our transitional housing in Wai'anae. She works as a Farm Assistant at Ka'ala Farms, a role that not only aligns with her long-term goals, but also fuels her passion for growth and healing. "Working at Ka'ala Farms has been a blessing," she shared. "I've learned to save money, be patient, and love every living thing. It's changed my outlook on life."

Alexis's story is one of resilience, growth, and full-circle transformation—from client to colleague. She is a role model for other youth and a daily reminder of the life-changing impact your support makes possible. "RYSE showed me that it's on me to make things happen, and they gave me the tools to do it." – Alexis

Thanks to your generosity, RYSE can continue helping youth like Alexis move from crisis to stability, and from surviving to thriving.

# POETRY IN MOTION

EMPOWERING VOICES, INSPIRING CHANGE



SCAN HERE

POETRY CAFE





# GRANTING HOPE

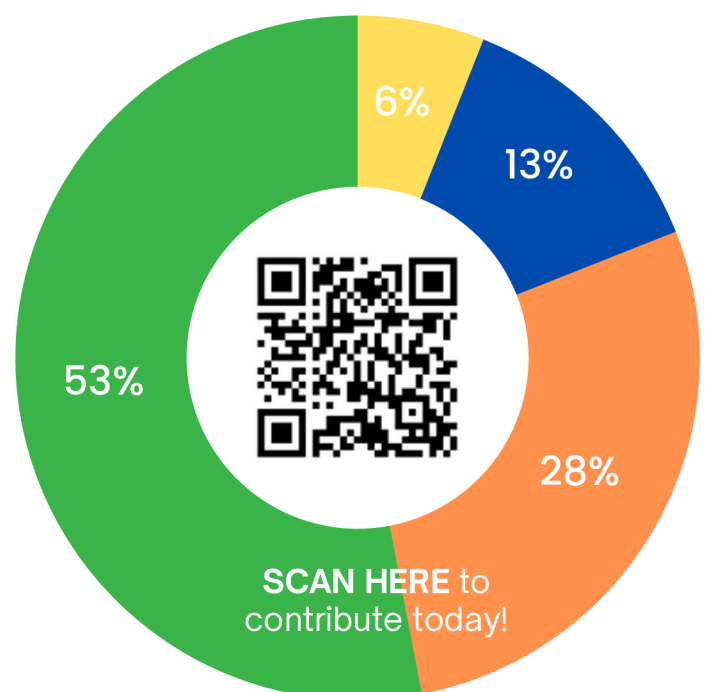
## Empowering Change

As we reflect on 2024, we want to express our deep appreciation for your unwavering support of RYSE. Whether through the backing of Federal and City & State agencies or the generosity of our private donors, each of you has played an integral role in our mission, and more importantly, in the lives of the young people we serve.

Thanks to your commitment, we've created a safe, inclusive space where our youth can not only find refuge but also discover the empowerment to move forward. Your support has allowed us to offer vital services that address the complex challenges our youth face. From counseling and mentorship to education, life skills training, and recreational opportunities, your contributions have been the backbone of our programs—helping our youth not only overcome obstacles but thrive.

### 2024 Funding

## Funding Sources



# GRATITUDE IN ACTION

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With heartfelt gratitude, we thank all of our generous donors and partner organizations whose support powers the mission of Residential Youth Services & Empowerment. Your contributions make a lasting difference in the lives of the young people we serve.



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As we reflect on 2024, we celebrate the hundreds of young lives impacted through safe shelter, skilled outreach, healing-centered care, and system-diverting interventions. Our youth are navigating extraordinary challenges—and still, they show up with courage and potential. Whether stepping into a counseling session, moving into permanent housing, or choosing a path away from incarceration, these moments add up to something powerful: transformation.

With continued community support, we look ahead to 2025 with renewed commitment and hope. Brighter futures aren't just possible—they're happening now, one youth at a time.



*Our mission is to provide a continuum of support that empowers Hawaii's street youth to move beyond homelessness. We envision a community where there is no youth homelessness.*

**Need Help Now?**  
**Call or text, day or night:**  
**808-861-6606**

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